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Jeffrey S. McCracken
916-978-5100

DRAFT KLAMATH BIOLOGICAL OPINION ON COHO SALMON
AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 16, 2002

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) today provided the Bureau of Reclamation with a draft Biological Opinion (BO) on the effect of the operation of Reclamation's Klamath Project from June 1, 2002, through March 31, 2012, on the threatened coho salmon. The Klamath Project is currently operating under short-term BO's from both the NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that will expire on June 1, 2002.

The NMFS BO will be available for public comment from Thursday, May 16, 2002, through Friday, May 24, 2002. Copies of the BO may be obtained on Reclamation's website at: <http://www.mp.usbr.gov/kbao/bo/NMFSDraftKpopBO2002May16.pdf> or from Reclamation's Klamath Project Area office at 6600 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, OR 97603. Comments should be received by Dave Sabo, Klamath Project Area Manager, no later than 4 p.m. PDT on Friday, May 24, 2002.

Reclamation's comments and comments from the public will be provided by Reclamation to NMFS. After reviewing Reclamation's comments, NMFS will issue their final BO to Reclamation by June 1, 2002. This BO will provide operating guidance to the Klamath Project for the next ten years.

A contemporary water management agency, Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 western states. Today, these facilities include 348 reservoirs with the capacity to store 245 million acre-feet of water. Reclamation projects supply one out of five western farmers with irrigation water for approximately 10 million farmland acres. Reclamation facilities also provide water to about 31 million people for municipal and industrial uses. In addition, Reclamation is the nation's second largest producer of hydroelectric power, generating more than 42 billion kilowatt hours of energy each year from 58 hydroelectric power plants. Its facilities also provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits.

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